

News

Macomb County Board of Commissioners



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County Slashes Energy Costs with Alternative Provider & Green Solutions

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. – Not only are county buildings operating more efficiently while being environmentally responsible, Macomb County (through its Facilities and Operations (F&O) and Purchasing departments) is reaping benefits from its efforts to save energy.

As a result of its first two months of contracting electrical power from First Energy, the county saved approximately \$44,400 in energy costs (for nine buildings that draw power from its main powerhouse, plus the Administration Building). The savings do not reflect those for the county/court complex, but are a portion of a projected \$600,000 savings over the two year fixed-price agreement, which began in 2010.

At it's April 29 meeting, the Board of Commissioners is also expected to review a recommendation from the Buildings, Roads and Public Works Committee to go out for bid to replace lighting fixtures at the county's Hall Road warehouse. The new fixtures operate on motion sensors to cut down on extra usage throughout the file storage facility. The county is expected to realize nearly \$8,000 savings per year for the warehouse as a result of the lighting change, and will receive \$14,000 in rebates from DTE. The county anticipates a 3.3 year payback on the entire cost of the project.

In addition, Director of Facilities and Operations, Lynn Arnott-Bryks, said plans are in the works to use a portion of its \$749,000 Energy Block Grant funds to replace water-cooled units in the County building, cutting water costs.

"Certainly, it's the right thing to do," Arnott-Bryks said about the county's concerted effort to go green. "We want to be responsible not only to the taxpayers, but also to the environment. Of course, a great by-product of this is that we save money, especially in these economic times."

Other F&O initiatives to save both energy and taxpayer dollars include:

- The installation of water-saving devices, in particular at the jail, which utilizes the greatest amount of water of the county buildings.
- Motion sensors have been installed in restrooms and low use areas county-wide, and drinking fountains have been equipped with timing devices.
- All incandescent light bulbs have been replaced with compact fluorescent lamps, and when fluorescent light ballasts require replacement, T-8 lamps are installed.

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- The Administration Building parking lot lights, along with the county-owned street lights along the parking lot, will be converted to LED in 2010 through a \$171,895 grant awarded in conjunction with the City of Warren.
- Through the efforts of F&O and the Purchasing Department, the county's internal recycling program was expanded and 100.5 tons of recyclable material was kept out of the landfill from 10/01/08 to 9/30/09.
- In late 2008 an O-zone Laundry System was installed at the jail, resulting in an estimated \$24,644 savings annually. The Martha T. Berry Medical Care Facility also followed suit.

"Departments like F&O and Purchasing are unsung heroes in the fight to lower our cost of doing business," said Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Paul Gielegem. "While not front and center, their work behind the scenes helps us preserve services and protect taxpayers."

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